producing countries and the possibility of having future trading in pepper in Kuala Lumpur Commodity Exchange. The member-countrse* felt that it would be necessary to have a detailed study before a decision could be taken on either of these strategies.

(d) India supported the need for taking effective steps to increase the earnings of the farmers and also the member countries foreign exchange. However, on the specifics of the Voluntary Retention Scheme, India felt that this can be effective only if all producing countries, irrespective of whether they are members of IPC or not, agree to implement this scheme honestly and sincerely. As regards the commodity exchange at Kuala Lampur, since this may not be of much benefit to India, our position was that this issue needs to be studied in detail before a commitment can be made.

(e) IPC is a forum for the major pepper producing countries to periodically exchange information on programmes and policies followed by them relating to production, consumption and marketing of pepper and to coordinate their national efforts and obtain the benefits of cooperation in the area of production, research and marketing. In addition to India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brazil who have been members of IPC for a long time, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Micronesia have also now joined the Community.

It is perhaps relevant that soon after the Conference compiled and released the global production figures of pepper (which are lower than those of previous year), there has been a marginal increase in prices of pepper in the international market.

(f) Government have already made a market intervention to the extent of procuring 3000 ton nes of pepper through NAFED and Kerala State Co-operative Marketing Federation at a price of Rs. 33 per kg.

Diesel OB Subsidy to Deep-Sea Fishing Vessels

546. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what steps MPEDA propose to take to increase the present rate of diesel oil subsidy to deep-sea fishing vessels;

(b) whether a special scheme is proposed to be formulatedHo enhance such subsidies to sick marine fishing units under rehabilitation; and

(c) the steps being taken to assist the marine fishing sector by MPEDA?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) There is no such proposal.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The following strategies are being adopted to assist Indian seafood industry and to boost export earnings:

(0 Development of deep-sea fishing and diversified fishing for stepping up export production;

00 Stepping up production by culture fisheries;

(iii) Induction of new technology and value addition;

(iv) Modernisation of processing facilities, quality upgradation and waste reduction; and

(v) Agressive market promotion measures.

Plaa to Export Agriculture ProdactioB

547. SHRI VITHALBHAIM. PATEL: SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to export wheat, rice, cotton, sugar and other agricultural produce during the current year or in the future years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what price the above-mentioned foodgrain/items are expected to fetch in the international market;

(d) whether Government propose to allow the farmers to have licences to export their own produce; and

(e) whether Government propose to import any of the items mentioned in part (a) of die question during the current year ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINIS-